

House Resolution No. 913

Whereas, the members of the Missouri House of Representatives hold in high esteem those Show-Me State residents who have admirably committed themselves to a life of public safety through their employment and leadership as law enforcement officers; and

Whereas, Justin Keller of Joplin, Missouri, has earned considerable distinction as a Patrol Officer with the Joplin Police Department; and

Whereas, on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2003, Patrol Officer Justin Keller demonstrated his heartfelt devotion to the residents of Joplin when he became engaged in a shootout in downtown Joplin with a gunman who was attempting to resist arrest; and

Whereas, a fellow officer pulled over Paul E. Cox at Ninth and Main streets in Joplin as the suspect in a hit-and-run accident which occurred a few minutes earlier on C Street; and

Whereas, the thirty-seven-year-old driver of the suspect vehicle was wanted on an arrest warrant which had been issued one week earlier for a parole violation; and

Whereas, instead of surrendering peaceably, Paul Cox fired two shots at the traffic officer using a .44-caliber magnum revolver that had been stolen in a residential burglary earlier in the week in nearby Carthage; and

Whereas, after an unsuccessful attempt to steal another vehicle to make his getaway, Paul Cox returned on foot to where the original officer had been joined by Patrol Officer Justin Keller and a third policeman; and

Whereas, in the ensuing firefight, Patrol Officer Justin Keller and his colleagues fired thirty-seven rounds from their .40-caliber pistols and a rifle to strike the criminal eight times, including a fatal shot which ended the altercation with no injuries to civilians or officers:

Now, therefore, be it resolved that we, the members of the Missouri House of Representatives, Ninety-second General Assembly, join unanimously to salute Patrol Officer Justin Keller of the Joplin Police Department and to convey to him this legislative body's most heartfelt commendation of his selfless actions on Friday, February 14, 2003, when he bravely placed himself in the line of fire in order to protect the citizens of the Joplin community; and

Be it further resolved that the Chief Clerk of the Missouri House of Representatives be instructed to prepare a properly inscribed copy of this resolution in honor of Patrol Officer Justin Keller of the Joplin Police Department.

Offered by Representative Bryan Stevenson, No. 128

Representative Marilyn Ruestman, No. 131

Representative Steve Hunter, No. 127

Representative Ronald Richard, No. 129

I, Catherine L. Hanaway, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Ninety-second General Assembly, First Regular Session, do certify that the above is a true and

correct copy of House Resolution No. 913, adopted
March 18, 2003.

Catherine L. Hanaway, Speaker